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ABSTRACT

This study obtained a general picture of the preparation, certification, experience, and positions of teachers in Newfoundland and obtained other factual information relating to the nature of its teaching force. The report states that during the fall term 1971, a 59-item questionnaire was returned by 80 percent of the teachers employed in the school system of Newfoundland and Labrador. This preliminary report is based on two random samples of the total 4,964 questionnaire returns. Results of the samples covering an extensive range of topics are included. (MJM)

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STATUS OF THE TEACHING FORCE IN NEWFOUNDLAND

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The several reports and models on teacher education prepared during the past ten years indicate that there is abundant evidence that the existing systems of teacher education are no longer adequate. At least nine teacher education models, funded by the U.S.O.E. Bureau of Research, have been reported; almost every Canadian province has commissioned a report on teacher education; the topic "Teacher Education" was selected by the Commonwealth Specialist Conference to indicate the importance that most Commonwealth countries attach to teacher education, and in January of this year the James Report which made recommendations for teacher education and training in England and Wales was published. Against this background, and in recognition of the fact that patterns of Teacher Education are changing, the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland has undertaken a number of research projects aimed at indicating directions for the development of future programs in teacher education.

A study of teacher education in Newfoundland and Labrador is opportune. In recent years the educational organization in the Province has been changed as a result of the phasing out of one-room schools in favour of consolidated schools, the implementation of most of the recommendations of the Report of the Royal Commission on Education and Youth, 1967, the construction of a number of vocational schools, and the decision to establish at least two regional colleges within the next three years. In addition to these institutional changes, a number of schools have introduced, or are planning to introduce, innovations in administration and curriculum. Such changes will affect the teacher education programs.

Since it is recognized that the role of the teacher is fundamental in developing successful innovative programs in the schools, appropriate training, both pre-service and in-service, is a vital concern to the Faculty of Education.

In carrying out its task, the Committee appointed to study teacher education programs will consult a broad range of informed opinion both within and outside the province; will investigate and discuss the reports and models on teacher education, the different types of programs being developed and the contemplated changes. Visits to other provinces and countries are being made. At present, Dr. Warren is in England and, since last September, he has visited a number of countries in Europe. Data is being and will be collected from a variety of sources. Questionnaires are being sent to superintendents, supervisors, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, the Provincial Department of Education, the College of Fisheries, the College of Trades and Technology, and the Denominational Education Committee. Briefs are being sought from the departments in the Faculties of Arts and Science, business and labour groups, the Home and School Association, and selected teachers' associations in other provinces.

Since the Faculty of Education is interested in examining models used in the training of other professionals, the Committee has undertaken the task of interviewing deans in faculties of law, medicine, engineering and nursing, and professors in departments of commerce,

physical education, computer sciences and technology. Some express the opinion that Teacher Education tends to use the academic model and ought to use models more closely related to those used in the training of other professionals. The Committee hopes that when the data is collected and analyzed a more functional model for teacher education will be developed.

The Committee believes that students, both school and university, and parents can provide most valuable information. The points of view of randomized samples of students and parents throughout the Province will be sought.

A special study of curriculum projects and experimental programs ongoing in Canada, the U.S., and Europe will be undertaken. Resource people involved in experimental programs will be invited to discuss their research with the Committee, and members of the Committee will visit selected schools and colleges engaged in experimental programs.

Recently, the Faculty of Education presented a brief on research in education to members of the A.U.C.C. Commission. That brief will be re-examined and recommendations will be made to the Committee on the role of and the problems related to research in the Faculty in relation to the development of programs for the continuing education of teachers.

At present the results of a study of the Newfoundland and Labrador teaching force is being analyzed. The study was requested

by the Joint Committee representing the Denominational Education Committee, the Provincial Department of Education, the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, and Memorial University. The purpose of the study was to obtain a general picture of the preparation, certification, experience, positions, and data on factual information relating to the nature of the teaching force.

During the Fall term, 1971, the 59-item questionnaire, a modified version of that used in Alberta, was returned by 80 per cent of the teachers employed in the school systems of Newfoundland and Labrador. For practical purposes the data will be regarded as pertaining to the total population of teachers employed in the school systems. Returns are available for every one of the 36 school districts and analysis of these returns will indicate similarities and differences in the nature of the teaching force in relation to demographic and economic factors. The report when completed, in the near future, will attempt to be strictly factual. Information will be reported in tables and charts. The more important results will be pointed out. Beyond this selection, interpretation of the findings will be controlled.

This preliminary report is based on two random samples of the total 4964 returns -- one sample represents the city of St. John's; the other the Province excluding St. John's. The results reported here should be interpreted with caution, and may, indeed, be changed when the total returns are analyzed.

In the city of St. John's, according to the sample returns,

29 per cent of the teachers were men and 71 per cent were women. However, in the Province, excluding St. John's, 46 per cent were men and 54 per cent were women.

The age range of teachers is interesting. In the under 30 age range 55 per cent in St. John's compares with 64 per cent in the Province. In the age range between 46 and 65, 18 per cent teach in St. John's and 8 per cent teach in other parts of the Province.

In the Province as a whole, 46 per cent of teachers have four or more years of teacher training. However, 44 per cent in the Province, excluding St. John's, and 36 per cent in St. John's have two years or less. In the rural areas approximately 6 per cent of the teachers have less than one complete year of teacher training. Most of the teachers received their training in the Province of Newfoundland, 97 per cent of those teaching in St. John's and 89 per cent of those teaching in other parts of the Province.

When provision is made to provide courses for teachers, it is interesting to note the number of teachers who take advantage of the opportunity to up-grade themselves: 80 per cent of the teachers in St. John's had taken courses at summer session or in the evenings since 1965; 70 per cent living outside that city had taken courses. During recent years the University has offered courses, many by means of video-taped programs now being offered in 26 off-campus centers.

The samples analyzed indicate that more than 80 per cent of teachers classify themselves as classroom teachers. There are few full-time counsellors and librarians in the Province. The sample returns

indicate about one per cent or less in both categories. In St. John's most teachers teach one grade; approximately 6 per cent teach two or more grades. However, in other parts of the Province approximately 22 per cent teach two or more grades. In the Province excluding St. John's, there are small schools. Approximately 18 per cent of the teachers are employed in schools with from one to three teachers. There are no schools of similar size in St. John's where 43 per cent of the teachers work with 25 or more teachers.

Data on the assignment of teachers to teach in those areas in which they consider themselves specifically trained is interesing, and the city of St. John's differs from the remainder of the Province. The tentative data available from the two samples is presented in Table 1. In St. John's, although it appears that about 6 per cent considered themselves trained in reading, only 2 per cent were assigned to teach reading. Outside the city slightly more than one per cent considered themselves trained in reading, but approximately 4 per cent were assigned to teach reading. Bearing in mind the possibility of sampling errors, it appears that, in St. John's, teachers trained to teach physical education, science, math, and French, and those trained as counsellors, are assigned to teach in those areas. However, only about half of those trained in English and social studies are in fact teaching those subjects. In the Province, excluding St. John's, those trained as counsellors are not employed as counsellors. Only half of those trained in science and social studies are assigned to teach

TABLE 1

X area for which most adequately prepared -- number of teachers reported in percentages

Y area to which mainly assigned -- number of teachers reported in percentages

Newfoundland, excluding St. John's

	Reading	Social St.	Eng.	French	Math	Sc.	Ph.Ed.	Counsellor
X	1.25	18.75	14.37	4.37	12.5	2.5	0.62	3.75
Y	3.75	9.37	9.37	3.12	13.75	1.25	1.25	0

St. John's

X	5.6	13.8	11.25	2.5	5.0	1.9	1.25	1.87
Y	1.9	5.0	5.26	1.87	3.8	1.3	1.25	1.87

those subjects. French and math teachers are teaching in those areas. Approximately 14 per cent consider themselves trained in English but 9 per cent teach English.

Excluding St. John's, 69 per cent of the teachers had less than 10 years teaching experience, and 6 per cent had taught for 20 years or more. The respective figures for St. John's are 58 per cent and 18 per cent.

Approximately 54 per cent of the teachers had two years teaching experience. In the city 13 per cent had from 10 to 24 years teaching experience; outside the city only 2.50 per cent had similar teaching experience. About one-third of the teaching force had experience in one school system and 5 per cent had experience in 5 school systems. More than 50 per cent of teachers had remained as full-time teachers without a break in service lasting one school year. Of those who had at least a one-year break in teaching service, approximately 30 per cent gave further study as the reason.

When asked whether they intended to remain in the field of education until retirement, approximately 45 per cent replied "yes", 30 per cent were undecided and 14 per cent replied "no". There were only slight differences between the replies received from the two samples.

More than 60 per cent of the teachers in St. John's had clerical assistance for periods from less than one to two hours per week. However, only 29 per cent of the teachers working outside the city were given that amount of clerical assistance. In St. John's 81

per cent of the teachers had not had the use of teacher aides; outside the city the figure reached 91 per cent.

Ability grouping is used by approximately 80 per cent of the city teachers and 50 per cent of the other provincial teachers. In the city, students were able to choose their own project work according to 75 per cent of the teachers, and in other parts of the Province 70 per cent of teachers reported a similar practice. About 20 per cent of teachers engage in team teaching. There are few resource centers in the Province and few libraries are well equipped. Generally, part-time librarians are available in about 25 per cent of the city schools and in 9 per cent of other provincial schools.

In summary, the two samples provide information on the teaching force in Newfoundland and Labrador. Women teachers outnumber men in St. John's; the sexes are about evenly divided in the rest of the Province. Approximately 60 per cent of the teachers are in the under 30 age range. Relatively few older and more experienced teachers are teaching in rural areas.

Over 90 per cent of the teachers were trained in Newfoundland and 46 per cent have had four years teacher education. More than 70 per cent of all teachers are actively engaged in up-grading their qualifications. Most teachers break their teaching service to return to full-time study.

Teachers are not always assigned to teach in those areas in

which they consider themselves trained. Only about one half of those trained in English and Social Studies are assigned to teach those subjects.

Teachers do not have clerical assistance. There are few teacher aides employed. Trained counsellors and librarians are in short supply. Few resource centers and few well-equipped libraries add to the teachers' problems. Perhaps it is not surprising that only 45 per cent of all teachers expressed their intention to remain in the field of education until retirement.